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A Flicker Upon The Eyes

GentleMountainLion (http://www.geocities.com/Athens/forum/6214)

> A Flicker upon the eyes,
> Such is the seconds pause in lapse of pause,
> Images confront the mind to be swayed forth of interest;

A Journey is started, the feet are fixed in motion. A seeming beat marks the distance, a tune puckers the lips, a smile flows forth the heart. The traveler passing marks no trail, yet alone is the shape of feet in the earth to mirror the gait of his travel. The man looks around taking pause. To the high confines of the trees, the birds are heard to sing, the impeccable woodpecker is heard in effort of meal in some nearby tree, persistent in all ways. The single trail of cool sweat seeps from his cap, to steer a path along his brow to rest on his beard. A gloved hand casually wipes it away, to once again settle upon the mantle of hard leather. Once more the traveler pushes on.

The path before him is sparsely adorned with the traces of many passing. A note of caution greets his attention, for upon the path is the noticeable trace of a mountain lion. The man stoops low and feels the coolness of earth, feeling the impression of the print of the lion. The sole step of many that he looked at filled the space of his hand, the area near the finger tips deeper pressing, but noticed is that only the top layers of earth was disturbed. Following the still recent path, the traveler takes notice of a marks of the passing of an deer of good fair size, the placement is of pause then there is a sudden movement, the smearing of the front right hoof upon the earth. A signal of suspicion, the deeper impression of the one front hoof upon the earth once, then twice. Thus the threat was noticed, warned, but still there. Then the traveler looked to the next set of hoof prints. This time the deer paced a few feet, the gait uneven in its force, the sign of searching the wind. This evident is the deer walking to the north of the grazing spot five paces, then sweeping to the west three paces. Obviously trying to get downwind of the predator, the mountain lion. The deer paused in the position, facing southeast of the grazing ground, stomping again. The lion was spotted in the position of southeast of the Deer and the grazing ground of tall clump of grass unearthed, being dug up by the hoof left hoof of the deer.

From there the deer seemed to disappear. The traveler looked around in a circle of seven feet diameter of the last position, but focused in the area northwest, away from the lion. But the deer bolted southwest, an interesting path of fleeing. The lion's strong and widely spaced gait, which tore deep gashes into the land, was not far behind. The space between the steps being fourteen feet, a pretty hefty lion, maybe eighty pounds? Not sure. But the lion is an adult, for the paws are huge, with the claws digging three inches deep grooves in the earth. The man follows one, curious as to the fate of the deer. The man more takes to the path, mounting one more the pacemaker of his trails.

Slowly he paces the trail, searching of the story of the hunt, the search of survival. Closer he comes, the steps getting fresher, damper with the stirred soil, treasured moisture uprooted with every step, not yet perspired into air's confines, the gentle sigh of wind cools the dwindling day, as day shifts into night, a slumbering embrace. Further still they carry forth the search. Leaves now less marked, the chase has slowed down. The prey now becometh the feast? Or has freedom sounded its bells on thee frightful deer? The branches less frayed in the heat of the chase. It has slowed; even the air seems to have dropped the aired excitement that pulsated in eve of the hunt.

This traveler decides to once more dismount from his loyal carrier, and looks to the earth. Hmm, the lion's gate has changed its expression from one of pursuit to that of silence. Did it catch my scent? Did it retreat? Is there another presence here?

He comes upon the scratched surface of tree; the lion has taken to the high branch of tree. Lo, the wise lion parched upon frayed branch, watching, just watching. This spot marked occasion shall pass. The traveler sets camp. His eyes on the lion, every pulsing second, unsure of reaction. Still the lion rests, hungry as it is inside. Curiosity has indeed stricken the cat. It stays in its skyward fortress watchful, the eyes lit in reflection of the setting arc of sun.

The traveler, picking up the tools of his own craft for hunt, goes to find a meal. Finding one, he returns to find the Lion already poised upon his stuff, curiously searching, yet not running off when the traveler returns. The traveler is confused with this last action, totally against instinct's intuition and knowledge. Why is it staying? Why is it not scared of me? Have I indeed made a friend somehow? Not sure, the traveler picks from beltsack a chunk of salted and dried parcel of meat and offers it in the direction of the lion. The lion seems not to care. Ahh, not of this meat eh? He takes the snared rabbit and begins to prepare it. The lion watches, hunched upon the nearest rock, gazing. Yet not leaving.

Soon the smoke of cooking stirs the air, gentle fragrance the mesmerizing force indeed. The meal is still upon the flames when the lion bursts from his confines of silence and rests within three feet of the fire, watching, the fire blazing in his eyes, the reflection of purpose. But it does not dare the flames to laugh and scorch it tonight. The lion waits patiently. The traveler, smirking, tosses a chunk in the direction of the lion. The lion bolts upright, summersaults and with all gracefulness, snares the piece within its claws and consumes it. The reward for the gentle lion... the lesson is seen. Why does it stick around? I will no betray this trust, never.

The traveler then readies himself for rest, falls asleep, confident in his new friend. Night falleths full. The moon the guardian of the night, blazing forth into the heavens reflections. Night becomes day. The travel opens his eyes. The lion less than ten feet stares into the distance, not moving, just testing the air. Next to the fire sits a downed pig, as if waiting for the traveler as in return of a favor.

Together lion and traveler go forth, another journey, the man on his trusted steed, the lion upon the higher hills, never too far away... a friendship struck for all times... a friendship in spirit. Tis another journey...

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